

# **Predictors Of Generativity And Satisfaction With Life In A Sample Of Women Offenders**

**Deborah A. Kashy and Merry Morash**

## **Why are generativity and satisfaction with life important?**

Generativity is a concern for other people, including future generations, and is indicated by a variety of activities such as contributing to youths' positive development and helping others during difficult times. Life satisfaction is a global assessment of quality of life. These concepts have rarely been examined for correctional populations, but they have important influences on prosocial behavior. Enhancing generativity and satisfaction with life can complement reducing risks to promote lawabiding behavior.

## **How did we study generativity and satisfaction with life among women on probation and parole?**

We gathered data from 260 Michigan women on probation and parole. Data from the Women's Risk/Needs Assessment (WRNA), including changes in specific risks and needs over time, were used to identify the predictors of generativity and satisfaction with life.

## **What did we find?**

Psychological variables, especially a measure of depression and anxiety and a measure of self-efficacy, were the best predictors of generativity and satisfaction with life. They accounted a third of the variance in life satisfaction. The psychological variable, self-efficacy, explained about one fourth of the variation in generativity. Contextual variables – especially high-crime neighborhoods and unsafe housing, explained less but still a substantially important 15 percent of the variance in life satisfaction. Somewhat different, lower employment financial needs and decreasing financial needs explained a smaller but still substantively important 15 percent of the variance in generativity.

## **Implications**

Referrals to mental health, assistance in finding safe housing in safe neighborhoods, and access to monetary resources are promising targets for interventions intended to increase the generativity and life satisfaction for women on probation and parole. Each of these targets can be viewed as resources women have available to negotiate difficult life circumstances. Success in accessing these targets depends not only on probation and parole agents' referrals to programs and services, but also investment to reverse the shrinking safety-net benefits, investment in community development, and policies that ensure access to employment.

Source: Deborah A. Kashy and Merry Morash, Predictors of Generativity and Satisfaction with Life in a Sample of Women Offenders. *Psychology, Crime, and Law*, vol. 28, no 6, 587-607, 2022.